

# THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.

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## PRACTICAL.

### VOCAL EXECUTION.

IN treating of the fundamental properties of style in vocal music, it remains only to speak of expression. This is a topic of great interest, and must not too hastily be disposed of; especially as it is little understood, and little valued by most musicians of a limited education. Our vocalists of the devotional school seldom aspire to the knowledge of this requisite. The men who officiate as organists are often peculiarly deficient in this respect. And, lamentable as this deficiency is, its existence is not suspected by the mass of the religious community, nor even by the generality of musicians themselves. Mechanical dexterity is the thing chiefly insisted upon; and while there is so much deficiency as to the ruder mechanism of style, the public attention is with difficulty led onward to higher attainments.

This circumstance creates an embarrassment which must be encountered at the very threshold of these observations. Many who have followed the writer thus far, very cheerfully, may now be ready to accuse him of being "more nice than wise." Others will be for procrastination. There will be time enough to attend to this requisite, when the previous ones shall have been fully mastered. Others still will secretly plead the want of religious feeling as a reason for neglecting expression. A fourth class will refer to the general want of information on musical subjects, and a fifth to want of literary taste, as barriers to improvement; and perhaps the general prepossession of the public mind is at the present moment, if it could be ascertained, decidedly in favor of neglecting this subject; at least in every practical point of view. Still, we do not feel at liberty to pass it over in silence, or to treat it in a manner wholly superficial.

What would be thought of the historic painter who should content himself with presenting mere outlines, embracing attitudes, figures and proportions, while he neglected the filling up of the picture and failed to bring life and expression upon the canvass? Would his pupils be satisfied, and would the public insist on no higher claims? The untutored savage might not conceive of any such requisites in the art; yet with all his ignorance, he would not be blind to the more obvious traits of expression when they were fairly placed before him. And, certainly, if the picture were intended to produce a moral influence upon him, these traits could not with propriety be withholden.

And what would be thought of a statuary who should pursue a similar course? He might bring a very plausible plea for such deficiency. His marble must be dug, and quarried, and rough hewn, and brought to hand with no inconsiderable labor. It must be blocked out into a general resemblance of the human figure. It must have a pedastal, be furnished with feet and arms, with a head and with muscles. And it must with great care and labor, be brought to be a fair representation of a human being. Let the sculptor stop here, and tell his pupils and his patrons, that in the present state of the art, nothing higher can be expected, or undertaken with the least prospect of success; and let his fellows of the craft who are miserable workmen, join with him, and confirm his statements, and adduce their own labors and difficulties as full demonstration of the propriety of his position. Let this be done extensively and heartily, yet what would it avail? Who would thus be imposed upon? The "speaking monuments" of antiquity are before us, and they can give high and unanswerable testimony. What has so often been done in different ages and countries, may be done again, at least in kind, if not in degree. The human figures must be made striking *likenesses* of individuals; their features must be true to nature; they must have "life," and animation; they must exhibit traits of mind and of character: nay they must even *seem* to "speak" to us, if they are to answer the purposes required. The statues of a Nero and a Washington, a Bonaparte and a Howard, must not be so similar to each other, as to confound all identity of person, character, and disposition, if they are to be of the least benefit to mankind; and, in proportion as the object to be gained, rises in our estimation, in the same proportion will these discriminations of the artist be found to rise in the scale of importance.

Here is a principle, the justness of which, no one will call in question. The lovers of patriotism and the friends of humanity, when they wish

to perpetuate in marble, the deeds, the character, the very countenance of the man they delight to honor, will have it done in a workmanlike manner. They will have an expressive statue or none at all. A simple shaft with a name engraved, would be preferred to any general uncouth or inexpressive resemblance to a human figure. And they are right in this thing. They have no alternative. The personage in question would be dishonored if they were to act on other principles. They act in accordance with the universal consent of mankind in every age and nation. The man who is to be honored, must be served with the best in kind. It is a universal principle; and one that will stand while the world endures.

And has this subject nothing to do with religion! Is the honor of God a thing of less importance than the honor of men? Why then, did God ordain the "first fruits" for his own service and worship? Why did he forbid the blind, the lame, and the torn to be offered in sacrifice? Why does he command the entire consecration of all our powers and faculties in his service? No: the principle has even a higher application here, than among the affairs of men. God watches over his own institutions with a holy jealousy; and he will one day bring us to account for all our negligence or contemptuousness, in reference to his praises here below. He has given us themes of song inimitably beautiful, sublime, and glorious, and commanded that they should be sung intelligibly, skilfully, heartily, to his praise. Are we doing it? If not; what are our excuses and apologies? What are our strong reasons? The art is *difficult* it has been said. But God is not a hard master, reaping where he has not sown. So are other things difficult. Eloquence, painting, poetry, statuary, architecture, are branches not readily acquired by every one in perfection; yet they are continually cultivated: they are abundantly patronised, and are made to administer to human comfort, honor, pride and tasteful gratification. Even in the *secular* department of musical cultivation, there is no want of industry, zeal, enthusiasm, success or patronage among the lovers of song. These things testify loudly against the apathy of the Christian church in reference to the high praises of the sanctuary. The cherished monuments of human art, shall witness against her. These shall be her judges.

But some one will be ready to reply, that this reasoning is not applicable to individuals, but to the church at large. All men are not eloquent. All are not painters, poets, sculptors, architects: all are not musicians. Few would excel in these departments, if they were to un-

dertake. Those who have genius and natural talent, are the men concerned in this reasoning. These are comparatively few; the church is but a portion of the world's population; and if men of genius will devote themselves so exclusively to the world, the fault is theirs, and not hers. The sin will not lie at her door. She is to be accounted innocent.

This position is the one most generally taken; and the reasoning in support of it, sometimes appears plausible. It seems, indeed, the only one which can be assumed with the least appearance of reason; yet, if the subject be duly weighed, it will be seen that the position is untenable.

Excellence in the fine arts, when regarded in a moral point of view, will of course be of a relative nature. The question here is a perfectly plain one: not whether every individual shall be a Raphael, a Demosthenes, a Beethoven; but whether he shall do the best his circumstances allow, towards the improvement of his own faculties, and the encouragement of talent in others. The barbarous nation may have its rude paintings and monuments and architecture. The ancient Jews were to offer the best things in their possession; not always the best the earth could furnish. Their second temple was less splendid than their first, for instance, because the nation had been greatly reduced in numbers and in wealth. But if the circumstances had been otherwise, if the nation had then been numerous, powerful, and affluent, as in the days of Solomon; and if, in the mean time, they had been erecting costly edifices for private use, honor, or emolument: then the comparative homeliness of the second temple would have testified against them; and for any thing that now appears to the contrary, would have reflected dishonor upon the name and cause of Zion's King. We are to improve what talents we have, and to employ them to the best advantage; then, and then only, shall we meet with the approbation of the Giver. It is by the neglect and misapplication of our powers, that our Maker is dishonored.

Apply this principle to the case in hand. All have natural powers of speech and song: both require much cultivation, while both are to be employed for the glory of God. All children might be easily taught to sing if attention were given to the subject in infancy and early childhood: to sing the praise of God is a christian duty; and parents are bound to train up their children to the service of God. Yet this part of his service, is in the multitude of instances, discouraged both by precept and example.

What shall be said of the affluent professor, whose splendid mansion is filled with costly furniture, elegant busts, prints and paintings; whose children are taught all the accomplishments of the age, while yet they are never instructed in the science of sacred praise? Why are the daughters of such a family drilled from four to six years, on the pianoforte, and not as many hours in devotional song? Is there nothing wrong in this? Or go to the middling classes in society. Why are botany, chemistry, drawing, ornamental needle-work, and various other branches, *comparatively* unimportant, continually preferred to the cultivation of vocal music? And why is the latter almost universally excluded from the primary and high schools and colleges? Why are our ministers, lawyers, physicians, for the most part, destitute of a knowledge of devotional music? The answer is obvious. Such knowledge is not valued. Men must be taught the arts and sciences which are useful and honorable among themselves: but it is thought unnecessary for them to learn to glorify God, in the divine ordinance of praise. Men can live upon the bounties of God, and be glad; but as to the matter of praising him in the way of his own appointment they seem to care very little about it, though, professedly his peculiar people. Is not this a strange anomaly in the Christian character! Let this anomaly be done away and we shall hear less of the difficulties of the art. Men will then have some tenderness of conscience on the subject. All will feel some measure of responsibility. They will begin to delight in it. Then they will no longer content themselves with superficial acquirements: nor be found to arrest the progress of rational improvement. Then the cultivators of the art will not stop at the simple point of accurate or polished enunciation. They will study effect, and look for moral results and Christian influences; nor rest satisfied till these, are in some measure secured and realized. Expression will then become in practice as well as in theory, a fundamental requisite, a crowning excellence of sacred song. Nothing but the public indifference to the whole subject prevents this from being the case, at the present period: and, since this indifference is wholly inexcusable, we shall not be retarded by it, in the discussion before us. In some instances, it is already giving way to the anxiety for improvement. Information is called for: the evils of a feeble, inefficient, affected or artificial style, are more felt and deplored than formerly; and there is an increasing demand for vocal talent of a higher order. Gifts will of course continue to be various. But every one will be interested when the subject is thoroughly understood and reduced to practice. Those who have but one talent

may put it out to the usurer's, while those who have two, five or ten, will seek how they may best improve them in the promotion of God's praises. The church wants *Christian* vocalists, more than Mozarts or Beethoven's. She needs heartfelt expression, rather than that, which proceeds from mere musical susceptibility. No musical expression will suffice for the purposes of edification, public or private, but that which arises in connexion with Christian sentiment, and genuine devotion of heart.

These things premised, we are prepared to enter, in our next number, more directly on the important topic which lies before us.

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#### MUSICAL MORALS.

ONE of the biographers of Handel says, he may be truly ranked with the moral and the pious: and that the ingenious sculptor who formed his monument, has placed within his hand the representation of a musical roll containing one of his favorite passages, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Well, that is all very tasteful; but where is the *proof* of Handel's real piety? The *same writer* speaks of him as a man of violent temper, who could swear successively in four or five different languages! While writing for the Opera too, in one of the European states, the principal singer for whom he wrote, was the kept mistress of one of the princes. This was comparatively a small sin for the times in which he lived: but if there is any meaning in the old proverb, "A man is known by the company he keeps," such things should be deemed suspicious circumstances.

But what sublime strains of music he wrote! They seem almost inspired! How could a man who had no spiritual sense of religion be found to produce such things!

This inquiry has often been urged by writers who wish to Christianize the memory of Handel. But the question has an easy solution. There is, as we remarked in the last number, a religion of the imagination which extends not to the heart. A composer, whether a Christian or not, may have conceptions and emotions of the sublime, beautiful, pathetic, &c., and by assuming for the moment, a religious character, just as a play actor does upon the stage, he may imbody these conceptions in powerful strains of sacred song; and these strains of sacred

song will be likely in their turn to awaken similar conceptions or emotions in the minds of other people.

Such in truth, is the music of Handel, as well as that of the more modern German school. The strong appeal is to the imagination. It is like the charm of romance. It is like theatrical representations of real life; and if so, just as unproductive as they are, we may suppose, in moral or religious results. Just as soon might we expect an impassioned play actor to become a christian moralist, or a confirmed novel reader to be increasing in habits of active philanthropy, as a musician of the oratorial school to be forming a devout spiritual character, through means of these highly imaginative strains of music.

The principle here thrown out, is perfectly obvious. Any school-boy can understand it. And it is the more important in this connexion, because it is so extensively overlooked by every class in the community; and especially as great injury is done by this negligence, to the cause of devotional song.

What is the real perfection of human eloquence? Is it to exhibit the person of the speaker, to display his talents and to call forth our admiration of his oratorical powers? Or is it, on the other hand, to make us as far as possible, lose sight of the speaker in the contemplation of the all-important theme of his discourse or appeal? Common sense decides this matter. Let the same common sense decisions be every where carried into the field of musical cultivation, and we ask no more. At present the whole order of things seems to be reversed; and slow and painful, is the process of bringing them back to just principles. People will not inform themselves on musical subjects. They will not think, they will not even read. They will only *feel*, as they are operated upon, by some species of musical electricity. In reference to music, they are beings wholly passive, one might almost say. If they think at all, they reason from feeling, rather than from facts or fixed principles. We must look to the pulpit, therefore, as a powerful aid in reformation. But alas! how shall the pulpit, assist us, when its worthy occupants, for the most part, have need to be taught what are the very first principles of devotional music!

## THEORETICAL.

## HARMONY.

BEFORE entering in detail upon the subject of inversions, it may not be amiss for us to analyze a single specimen in which the chords are all fundamental without inversion. The tune Dresden will furnish us with a suitable extract. For the sake of convenience, we write all the parts upon the two staves. The upper notes upon the treble staff, present the air of the tune; those next lower, where three are inserted, embrace the second treble. The very lowest upon that staff are for the tenor; while the other staff is for the bass alone.



Of the ten chords, as here arranged, all, with the exception of those at the references *c*, *e*, and *h*, are common chords upon the tonic note or key; those at *c* and *h*, are common chords upon the dominant; while that at *e*, is a common chord upon the sub-dominant. The bass consists of the three fundamental notes of the scale, described in our last, with the omission of the added sixth and seventh of the sub-dominant and dominant; and, as the notes represented by the appoggiatures, are not here included in the reckoning, the whole passage is made up of fundamental concords. But, to be more particular,

1. Of the tonic chords. At *a*, the tenor takes the third, and the two trebles take the octave in unison, while the fifth is omitted. At *b*, the tenor takes the fifth, the second treble the octave, and the air the third. At *d*, *f*, and *i*, the case is precisely similar; while at *k* the arrangement is the same as at *a*, with this only difference, that the second treble takes the fifth instead of being in unison with the air.

2. Of the dominant chords. Those found at *c*, and *h*, are precisely alike in their arrangement, the tenor taking the octave, while the third and fifth are taken by the first and second treble.

3. Of the sub-dominant. The only chord of the sub-dominant which

occurs in this extract, is that at the reference *c*. Here the tenor and second treble carry the third and fifth, while the treble carries the octave (so reckoned though) at the distance of the fifteenth or double octave.

Thus much for the classification of the chords; but it is important to make a few additional observations.

1. Chords are said to be complete when they contain all the proper intervals; and to be incomplete when any interval is omitted. At *a* and at *e*, the chord is rendered incomplete by the omission of the fifth. This is allowed at the commencement and at the end of a strain of music in four parts, and elsewhere in music of two or three parts in the score; but the third, being a characteristic note, as we formerly said, (see last number,) has no such license.

2. An interval is said to be doubled when the same letter occurs twice in the same chord. In each of the chords in the above arrangement, the octave is doubled, and that alone. The fifth is allowed occasionally the same privilege; the third is more restricted in this respect.

3. The above chords, from causes formerly stated, have a remarkable relation to each other, *i. e.* each contains (the incomplete ones excepted,) some one interval which is found in the two chords immediately contiguous. The dominant at *c*, for instance, carries its octave which is heard in the tenor, as a fifth at *b*, and *d*: the sub-dominant at *e* carries its fifth in the second treble which same note forms the octave at *d* and *f*. The relations of chords are various and important; and will be duly considered in their proper place.

4. We have said that the bass in this example, consists wholly of the three fundamental chords of the scale. These chords all carrying major thirds, it follows that the scale is major. Let the signature be changed from one to four flats, and the thirds thus changed from major to minor, will show one of the infallible characteristics of the minor scale; and by the addition of an accidental natural at the interval *E*, as often as it occurs in this passage, the scale will be minor.

5. By analyzing the above fundamental chords all the eight notes of the scale may be obtained. The tonic embraces 1, 3, 5, and 8; the dominant furnishes 2, and 7, and the sub-dominant, 4 and 6. The intervals 1, 3, 5, 8,—2, 7,—4, 6, when properly arranged are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. See remarks in our former numbers.

6. Though each of the fundamental chords carries its regular intervals 3, 5, and 8, these intervals do not always stand in the same order, with relation to each other: nor do they change their name on account

of standing an octave higher in the staff. Though they stand relatively 1, 8, 5, 3—1, 5, 8, 3,—1, 3, 8, 5, or 1, 3, 5, 8; still while 1, or the fundamental remains in the bass, the chord is said to be direct, while only the derivative intervals have changed their *position*. The chords in the above example therefore, are all direct and none of them inverted.

7. But whether the *intervals* of a fundamental chord maintain a uniform position among themselves or not; yet whenever one of them exchanges places with the fundamental bass note, this constitutes what is called an *inversion* of chords. The next object is to describe and classify the inversions.

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#### WHAT CONSTITUTES MELODY?

THE question here presented, though a difficult one, is not unimportant. Perhaps it will never be fully settled, in every respect: but so far as it can be readily answered, the details will be of use.

By melody, we are here to understand that combination of qualities in the air or leading part of a musical composition, which gives us pleasure. This is rather an off-hand definition; but it may suffice for the discussion before us.

1. The air of a tune pleases us by embracing certain relations and distances which are derived from harmonic combinations. It is in this sense that melody has been termed "a harmonic analysis." The old English airs, for instance, naturally suggest to the mind combinations and successions in harmony, which have become trite, common-place, antiquated; the old German airs bring to mind heavy, learned accompaniments: those of the French nation are associated with the opposite characteristics; while those of the Scottish seem to embrace within themselves, harmonic skips which serve in some sense as a substitute for the accompaniment.

In modern music, plain airs naturally suggest gentle, easy harmony; airs that are chromatic or that contain such skips as remind us of difficult combinations, remote harmonic relations, &c., affect us agreeably or disagreeably, much according to our taste for these musical qualities. These references to harmony are more or less indistinct, and general, or clear and specific, according as we advance in the art of music, practical and theoretical.

2. An air pleases us by embracing certain intervals and inflections of voice, which nature has rendered indicative of passion or emotion. Some of these properties may be considered truly instinctive, as those which are the natural expressions of terror, grief, disdain, &c. Others are partly conventional, such as imitations of the funeral knell, the watchman's call. All these when properly arranged will be durable materials, and will be generally appreciated.

3. An air pleases us by containing passages of descriptive imitation. Handel often imitates birds, the noise of the elements, &c. Haydn in his *Creation* strives to imitate every thing that comes in his way. The writers of catches and glees, avail themselves largely of this property. But it belongs chiefly to the imaginative class of compositions; and has comparatively but little to do with music of the devotional school. Descriptive imitation effects the mind more or less powerfully, in proportion as the auditor enters into the thoughts and feelings, and intentions of the composer. This implies some knowledge of music.

4. Rhythmical effect has great influence upon the power of melody. The universal fondness for measured time, as seen in music and poetry, and in the handicraft operations of the mechanic, has already been alluded to, under the head of *TIME*. We need only add in this place, that the rhythm which is to give interest to a melody or form a constituent part of it, must be adapted to the sentiment, to the occasion, and to the habits of calculation among the performers and listeners. Rhythm that is not comprehended, gives no pleasure; and in proportion to the rapidity of a movement, is the importance of entire accuracy. Rhythmical imitations also have great effect in the higher walks of dramatic music.

5. To the above may be added the power of mental associations. Certain clauses, phrases, sections or larger passages of music as heard in the various tunes in which they frequently occur, necessarily awaken some kind of corresponding thoughts and emotions which are of a pleasurable or painful character. They often do this, almost with mechanical certainty, even where the origin of the associations is forgotten, or where the principle itself is unknown or unnoticed. Here is a fruitful source of melody, which requires, indeed, as it may receive, a separate discussion under another head in its more appropriate place.

But enough has been said in this place to furnish us with some important practical inferences.

1. If the pleasure and the influence of melody depend so much on the character of harmony and upon rhythm, then it seems necessary

that we should cultivate some acquaintance with music ; otherwise its influence over us, will of necessity, be very limited. Taste and susceptibility are faculties that greatly depend on cultivation : and where there has been a deficiency, in respect to the latter, it is quite wrong as well as unphilosophical, to charge the absence of the former, to absence of *natural* gifts. This mistake is constantly made by that portion of the community who neglect cultivation.

2 If the instinctive tones and inflections which nature furnishes, have such a power over our feelings, then that melody which aims at moral and religious results, should abound in them.

Yet it seldom does so. Our strains of sacred song are often insipid in this respect ; and what is worse, they are generally sung in a drawling, spiritless manner. No wonder they produce so little effect. Composers of the secular school are wiser. They infuse the music of instinctive nature into their melodies, by which means they become impassioned and impressive. Composers of the devotional school should do the same ; and in order to this, should cultivate those precious influences which appertain to genuine devotion. The same thing is requisite in the members of a choir ; for, of what use is it for the composer to imbue his productions with that which is never to be recognized by the executants ? He would lose his labor. Often his tenderest pieces would by this neglect be rendered insipid, as a matter of course.

3. If mental associations have such great influence upon the character of melody, then, in reference to religious results, we should be careful how we cultivate them ourselves or violate them in others. This is a topic of surpassing interest. Where, indeed, there is to be no cultivation of any kind, it is of less importance ; for where people will continue to trample the art under foot, it matters little in what way they choose to do so. But if music is to be cultivated devotionally, the work must be done in connexion with the most pure and hallowed associations. Language would fail to show the importance of this principle. It is habitually violated in ten thousand ways, by the christian community ; and yet the evil for the most part is not suspected. When music through this means is despoiled of its devotional influences, the absence is imputed to the deficiencies of the art, rather than to the mismanagement of the composer or executant. This is wrong. Mental associations have too much power over us, to be neglected with impunity. If the subject were prayer, it would be understood in a moment. How careful are we in social prayer, to employ right words and feelings, and thoughts and emotions ! Inattention, negligence, or levity, would here

be visited with utter barrenness of soul. And who has told us, that the same precise principle does not apply to that cultivation which seeks to improve us in the spirituality of devout praise to God! Certainly we get no such intimations from the Bible. And further; what if some one whose earlier years had been spent in scenes of low, lewd conviviality and profaneness, were to lead in prayer, regardless of all selection of phraseology? Would there be no shrinking from him? Could we join heartily in his Amen? Such is the influence of corresponding violations in devotional song.

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

### JUVENILE INSTRUCTION.

It always gives us pleasure to forward the interests of juvenile cultivation in vocal music. It is an object of unspeakable importance. A number of the Journal of Education contains copious extracts of an "Address by Mr. William B. Fowle, at an examination of the Female School, under his care." A few gleanings from the address will, no doubt, be acceptable to our readers. The class in vocal music referred to, had been instructed by Mr. Mason of Boston, nearly two years.

"It has always been my opinion that the capacity for music had been as liberally imparted to every rational being as a capacity for anything else;—a different amount of talent to every one, but to every one, something. I never believed that high attainments in this science or in any other, were to be expected from all; nor did I believe that such attainments were necessary to happiness. Excellence in science is the lot of few; and the excellent in music are not less numerous than those in painting, architecture, mathematics, or poetry. Why then has there been so prevalent a notion, that no one must try to sing but the gifted few? Certainly this notion does not owe its origin to the fact, that none but the gifted are pleased with music. If there is any thing intellectual in the science of music, why is it, that while the popular theory of mind maintains that every mind possesses every power, in an equal degree, and that to become a painter, or anything else, application and practice only are necessary—why is it, I say, that the opinion is so general, that the greater number never can learn to sing?

"All men have tongues; all men have the other apparatus for producing sounds, if they are not deformed; all men speak; all men would sing, if it depended only on the voice. Voice is only one requisite. Let my remark should seem to need support, let me ask, why every bird of a species is a singer. A nightingale that could not sing, would

be a wonder. We never see these little creatures kept at home, and forbidden to sing, because they have no voice, no musical ability. There is as much difference between the vocal organs of canary birds as of men; but they all sing. They do not believe the common notion. They no doubt have their Webers and their Mozarts, but they all sing. Why should it be otherwise with man? If it be said that singing is *their* language, and speech is ours, I deny the position. They have a language distinct from singing; and use singing as man does, for amusement, solace, excitement, &c. All who have a voice then may sing, if they may not excel.

"But what else is necessary? Hearing, some one will say. Hearing will enable a person to learn by imitation. Hearing alone, will not however, make a musician. If it would, the hare, or some other quick-eared animal would excel our race. All men hear enough to distinguish, not only words, but the tones of joy, kindness, anger, &c. All men have voice, all men have hearing; why then may not all men be singers? What further is necessary?

"It was not until lately that any satisfactory answer was furnished to this question. A new science has dared to teach men, that the movements of the vocal organ, and of the ear, are controlled by a distinct faculty of the mind. The old philosophy never dared plainly to assert this; and the reason why two persons with equally good ears and voices, could not sing equally well, was never explained. It is no longer a mystery to those who have examined the facts which support the new theory.

"They believe that every mind possesses every faculty, perhaps in a different degree, but still that the Creator has said to no faculty, 'thus far and no farther.' Exercise of a faculty like exercise of a muscle, gives its force, and skill, and facility of action. Action is the condition of growth; inaction, the certain commencement of decline.

"I do not intend to go into the details of the new science of mind. I only wish to present these thoughts to you as reasonable beings. All I ask is, that you will allow, that if voice and ear will not make a musician, the mind, as a whole, or some single faculty of the mind, must direct and control the external organs. Grant, as you must, that your children can distinguish a sound of pleasure from one of pain, that they can distinguish thirty thousand or more words from each other, that they can speak, and read, and give every other indication of the possession of the external organs of singing, and I shall hope to convince you, that if you allow each to have a mind, she may make a tolerable singer.

"This was my *theory* before I introduced music into this school. It is my *belief* now. I do not see one child of all who have attended the lessons of our teacher, that has not learned something. I know of no one that might not have made more progress, if she had used all her advantages. Some have been very attentive, and have excelled; some have been indifferent, and have made a corresponding progress; some have been inattentive, and have advanced no farther than an inattentive person could expect to advance. I see no difference in this respect, between students of music and students of grammar or geography; nor do I believe there is any.

"Who of you does not know that within two years, thousands in this city have discovered that they could sing, who supposed it impossible.

"But grant, it may be said,—grant that *all* can sing. What good will it do for all to learn? It is common enough to hear of the tendency of a passion for music, and of the danger of being a good singer. But whence does this danger arise? Good singers are scarce, they please, they are sought after, they are carressed. Were good singers more common, the danger would be diminished. Were music as common as reading, and I believe it may be made so, there would be no more danger in being a good singer, than in being a good reader.

"We acknowledge the effect of lectures, lyceums, multiplied schools, and higher seminaries; but there is still a chasm, which it seems to me that music, and music alone, can fill, and should fill; *can* fill, because all are pleased with music, and all can acquire a competent knowledge of it, and *should* fill, because the influence of music is unquestionably as innocent as it is exhilarating. It is the natural language of joy; even its plaintive strains are never a source of pain; and in every form it is adapted to soften and elevate the human character."

Music as a science will never be properly elevated in this country, till cultivation is made to form a regular branch of primary education. To some little extent it is beginning to do so. Instrumental music, indeed, is beginning to assume much importance in the public eye: but vocal music is yet in its infancy. The latter in every moral and religious point of view, is preferable to the former: If we cannot have both, let us have the latter. This is less expensive; it is most conducive to physical health, and to mental and moral improvement. Let the same measure of labor and skill and mental effort be brought to bear upon the one, which is now bestowed upon the other, and the true difference between vocal and instrumental music will be apparent.

We mean not the slightest disparagement of instrumental music. We only say that whatever attention is bestowed upon it, there should be no neglect of vocal cultivation. Vocal cultivation should be carried from the infant school up to the university through all the primary and academic institutions. This done, we shall see a radical reform. It can be done. It ought to be done. We trust that in process of time, it will be done. If only a few such enterprising and industrious men as Mr. Mason, would combine their efforts and unite their counsels and operations the object might be effected. At present, every distinguished musician seems bent on establishing an independent commonwealth of his own creation.

## THE TASK ASSIGNED US.

IN fulfilling the task assigned us by a clerical correspondent in the second number, we have shown that sacred music is a part of divine worship, appointed by God; and that all persons have by nature, adequate musical gifts. We are next to show, that those who do not qualify themselves to sing the praises of God, are guilty of hiding an important talent. This was the third point proposed.

But, is it really necessary to prove a point so obvious? Does not the bare possession of a gift show that we are bound to improve it? And does not the universality of this possession show, that the obligation is universal? All men, for instance, are furnished with feet; and what if a large portion of the race should refuse to walk. All have eyes and ears and hands; and the man who should refuse to employ them, would be called a maniac.

Speech, with a few solitary exceptions, is a universal gift; and what would be said of the man who should voluntarily act the part of a mute. The power of speech also requires time, labor, and expense in cultivation, quite as much as is requisite to enable us to sing: but we all learn the one, and with few exceptions neglect the other.

We dignify ourselves with the title of rational beings; but the most that can be said is, that nature, lays the foundation of this faculty; and leaves the superstructure to be reared by cultivation. Precisely the same thing is true of a talent for music. All have by nature, the foundations for improvement: all have nerves and muscles which vibrate; all have voices, all have ears, all have susceptibilities; all commencing at the proper time, might learn to sing with as much ease as they learn to think and to reason. But while the man who should neglect the one species of cultivation, would be despised for his stupidity or pitied for his imbecility, the man who should neglect the other species of cultivation, would act quite in accordance with the majority of his fellows, and be regarded the wiser for his neglect.

Thus we see, that men will be at almost any expense to improve themselves in that which can minister to worldly convenience, distinction, gratification or enjoyment; while they will excuse themselves in neglecting to cultivate the praises of God. Even Christians are found to do this. Men who hope to spend a long eternity in singing the song of the redeemed in heaven, in the presence of God and the holy angels, with golden harps in their hands; are now found from some strange com-

bination of causes, to refuse almost the slightest attention to the praise of God in his sanctuary below, to call it a wearisome, unprofitable service, and to refuse to bear any part in the songs of Zion. A few by way of distinction are of a different spirit: but with this trifling exception, the majority of professed Christians are found either to neglect the art entirely, or to treat it in such a negligent, careless, and superficial way, as to bring it into disrepute if not into secret contempt. All other gifts and faculties bestowed by the God of nature, providence and grace, may be improved, but the single one which has for its direct and specific object, the setting forth of his honor and glory in the sweet sounds of gratitude and love, and the lofty strains of adoration, praise and holy joy!

If this is not sinful, what is? If this is not a thing that everywhere involves individual responsibility, where shall such a thing be found? If the possession of gifts, does not as a universal principle, require the improvement of those gifts for the glory of the Giver; we see not what single principle of obligation can ever be enforced from the general fitness of things, existing in the whole created and intelligent universe.

But the argument does not stop here. We are invited, exhorted, urged, commanded to sing the praises of God, with the heart and the understanding, decently and in order, skillfully. These motives and injunctions are given just in such terms as to imply universal obligation; and they are found in the New Testament as well as in the Old. This point is already familiar to our readers. And where is there any escape from individual responsibility? All men are alike commanded to pray and to sing praise. He that neglects the one shall incur the wrath of God; and who will say, that the man who deliberately neglects or abuses the other, may not be found equally guilty in the sight of Heaven!

One single admission, seems however, to be demanded in this connexion. If any man has by many years of sinful neglect, so entirely lost his voice, that, it is impossible for him to regain it, or has so nearly lost it, that the labor and expense of recovering it would be more than he has power to bestow upon the subject; that man has only to repent of his sin, and do such works meet for repentance as are within his power. He has no right to be indifferent to such a subject, to forget it, or to treat it with neglect, as a matter which belongs exclusively to others. If he does so, we know not but he must still be called an offender. A voice he can no longer bring into the service, for he has none, and can acquire none; but he must encourage others who have voices. He must still delight himself in song. He must do every thing in pro-

motion of it that his circumstances will allow. Then, and not till then, as we conceive, will he be fully clear from the sin of hiding his talent. What portion of the present generation have thus disabled themselves, we shall not undertake to say. Our opinion, is, after years of investigation, that the number is very limited. Such persons, we suspect are rare to be found, whatever they may think of themselves. If any one thinks himself of the number, let him look to it, that he be not deceived.

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For the Musical Magazine.

MR. EDITOR: I seldom have any thing to do with matters of controversy. I always choose to "let alone contention before it is meddled with;" and if I happen to differ in opinion with some of my worthy brethren, I choose to press my own views with moderation, and give due weight to the opinions of those who oppose me. At least, this is a course which I have been endeavoring to pursue; and though, I fall infinitely short of perfection in all things, I do hope that I have been enabled to maintain a tolerable share of that spirit which is termed good nature; and I have imagined that more experience, and continued effort would enable me to make further progress. Indeed I find that as a musician, I must feel happy and contented in my work, or I shall not excel in any one thing; I must live under the influence of a calm placid temper, or I cannot be useful in my occupation. Here is my greatest difficulty. If I could only govern myself entirely; but it is not so. Some whole days are filled with lassitude and clouded with gloom. Then, in the next place, I find myself open to almost every species of imposition; and liable to be trampled upon, by men who seem to have none of my troubles. One speaks lightly of me, as a man wanting in spirit; another opposes my interest, by false insinuations. A third tries to circumvent me, by accusing me of circumvention; a fourth seeks to undermine my influence, by accusing me of endeavoring to undermine his; a fourth is one thing to my face and quite another behind my back; a fifth pretends to be my friend in public; but he does it in just such a way as to pass for a person of marvellous condescension. And then there are A, B, C, and D, from foreign countries, who unite practical skill, with ostentation, selfishness, tyranny, and even in many respects, with lamentable ignorance and impertinence. What shall I do? I wish

to be peaceable; yet I have rights to be secured. I have privileges which no man ought to take from me. I have duties to Heaven and to men, that must be faithfully discharged: yet if all these men are tamely suffered to say and do what they please, I see not but they will be too hard for me, and quite ruin my influence. Any advice you can offer to one thus sorely tried, will be gratefully received by

Your humble servant,

MINIM.

REMARKS. By a single observation which Minim has dropped, we may be allowed to imagine him a professor of religion, and a conscientious Christian. If he be not such a person, he ought to be; for "there is no peace," saith my God to the wicked.

"The wicked are as a troubled sea which cannot rest." Christians may have *peace* amid all their trials and perplexities, by pursuing the plain path of duty in the right temper and spirit.

1. Let musical talent be all thoroughly consecrated to God, and improved with a single eye to His glory. Then sacred music will always be preferred to secular; and such as is truly devotional will take precedence of that which is merely historical, descriptive and miscellaneous.

2. Let the field of labor be chosen, chiefly with reference to the greatest probable amount of usefulness. Life is short. If we wish to labor in God's heritage, let us do the best things in the best way and to the best advantage.

3. Any one who "will live godly in this present world, shall have persecution," in this age as well as in primitive times, though less perhaps in degree. Our *love of ease* may not be much gratified at best. "But if we suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are we" in the midst of suffering.

4. While in the path of Christian duty, look up with tender confidence to Heaven for a blessing. "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth liberally and upbraideth not." Here is an unfailing source of help and consolation. "Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed."

The above is the only advice we feel qualified to give. Where the opposite course is persisted in, we know of no remedy. There is in fact no other needed. If men will endeavor to feel right and to act right, and to look to God for a blessing, they will doubtless be helped and comforted, amidst all the trials that are incident to life.

## For the Musical Magazine.

MR. EDITOR,—I have sometimes thought that the sentiments of tender contrition, accompanied by a sweet sense of pardon might be most appropriately expressed in a song of affectionate gratitude and holy joy. This thought has given birth to the following effusion, which is wholly at your disposal. A. Z.

He sought and from a father's hand  
Obtained a portion large and free ;  
Then wander'd in a distant land,  
Living in sin and luxury.

His goods were wasted, famine came,  
Hunger and poverty severe ;  
The prodigal is clothed in shame,  
And finds no friend or helper near.

A hireling now, by sin debas'd,  
More brutish than the herd he feeds ;  
E'en husks are grateful to his taste,  
While none his want or mis'ry heeds,

Humbled in dust he thinks of home,  
A faithful menial there to prove ;  
A penitent he now would come,  
Nor dare to ask a father's love.

" Father I've sin'd ; my guilt I own ;  
Sin'd against Heav'n, and in thy sight ;  
Unworthy to be call'd thy son,  
Or see one ray of heav'nly light."

Ah ! what a melting scene appears !  
Who can describe a father's heart :  
What fond embraces, floods of tears !  
He with his son no more will part.

" Bring the best robe and cast around ;  
A feast of gladness I ordain :  
My son was lost, but now is found,  
Was dead, and is alive again !"

Great is the love of God to thee !  
O weeping penitent draw near ;  
His open arms, his mercy see :  
He comes in haste to meet thee here.

Bring music ; spread the festive board :  
And there record thy solemn vow ;  
Haste to the supper of the Lord,  
While love and joy and peace o'erflow.